रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जार्ज फर्नांडीज): (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) से (घ) प्रश्न नहीं उठते।

छत्तीसगढ़ क्षेत्र के भूतपूर्व सैनिकों के लिए कैन्टीन सुविधाएं

3060. श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव: क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) मध्य प्रदेश के छत्तीसगढ़ क्षेत्र में जिले-वार भूतपूर्व सैनिकों की संख्या कितनी है;

(ख) उनमें से कितने भूतपूर्व सैनिकों को जिले-वार स्थायी और चल कैन्टीनों की सुविधा उपलब्ध है;

(ग) इस क्षेत्र को जलपान गृह सुविधा कहां से उपलब्ध कराई जाती है तथा प्रत्येक जिले में कितने दिनों तक यह सुविधा उपलब्ध कराई जाती है; और

(घ) सभी जरूरतमंद भूतपूर्व सैनिकों, विशेष-रूप से सुदूर आदिवासी अंचल में यह सुविधा उपलब्ध कराने के लिए की गई व्यवस्थाओं का ब्यौरा क्या है?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जार्ज फर्नांडीज): (क) से (घ) मध्य प्रदेश के छत्तीसगढ़ क्षेत्र में भूतपूर्व-सैनिकों की जिलेवार संख्या इस प्रकार है:—

जिला	भूतपूर्व सैनिकों/विधवाओं की संख्या
राजनंद गांव	96
बिलासपुर	696
बस्तर	120
रायगढ़	888
रायपुर	645
दुर्ग	676
सरगुजा	191

2. भूतपूर्व सैनिक अपने नजदीक स्थित किसी भी कैंटन से कैंटीन-सुविधाएं प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। स्थिर कैंटीन सुविधाएं बस्तर, बिलासपुर और रायपुर में उपलब्ध हैं। चल कैंटीनें महीने में एक बार दुर्ग, रायगढ़ और राजनंद गावं जाती है।

3. प्रत्येक जिले में कैंटीन सेवाएं उपलब्ध कराना संभव नहीं है क्योंकि सीमित संसाधनों और लम्बा फासला होने के कारण यह आर्थिक दृष्टि से व्यवहार्य नहीं है।

Non-nuclear War Pact with Pakistan

3061. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Doordarshan through its National network telecast on 28th June, 1998 has given the news that Pakistan was planning use of nuclear weapons against India in near future with target to damage most vulnerable defence installations besides destroying important metropolitan cities of country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government have offered non-nuclear war pact to Government of Pakistan;

(d) whether Government propose to take up pact issue at International forum in view of (a), besides renewing it to Pakistan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Government have seen media reports about some Pakistani nuclear scientists who, having defected to western countries, have revealed Pakistan Government's alleged plans for pre-emptive nuclear strikes against India. Government have also noted from these reports the many inconsistencies that have been pointed out in the account of one of these "nuclear scientists". At the same time, such reports, proven or otherwise, vindicate steps taken by the Government to create a secure deterrent against the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction against India. Government have closely monitored the acquisition of clandestine ballistic missile and nuclear weapons capability by Pakistan. It has also noted statements by Pakistani leaders in this regard. It has taken the requisite steps to safeguard the nations's security and will continue to exercise the utmost vigilance in this regard.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) On May 27, 1998, the Government reiterated its readiness to discuss a "no first use" agreement with Pakistan as also with other countries bilaterally, or in a collective forum. In 1994, India had proposed to Pakistan that both countries jointly undertake not to be the first to use their nuclear capability against each other. This has been reiterated in a number of formal statements issued by India.

Damaged Items of CSD

3062. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of damage due to handling, etc. allowed on items provided to Canteen Stores Department;

(b) the percentage of damage shown by C.S.D., Air Force Station, New Delhi, during the last three years;

(c) whether there is any counter check by any independent authority to verify the claim of damage; and

(d) if not, will Government appoint an independent authority to go into such claim of damages physically to prevent false claim and to save loss to the exchequer?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) While regularisation of actual losses, incurred in handling of CSD stores is provided for, no permissible percentage, in this behalf, has been specified by the Department. However, in the case of Air Force Canteen, New Delhi, which is a Unit Run Canteen, the permissible percentage of damage, on account of handling etc. is provided @ 1% of the indent value. The percentage of loss, in the Air Force Station Canteen, New Delhi, during the last three years, is as follows:—

1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
0.033%	0.040%	0.042%

(c) and (d) There is, no question of any loss to the state Exchequer, emanating from the Air Force Canteen, New Delhi, which is a Non-Public Fund Canteen, under the Air Force Station, New Delhi. The same, however, is subject to annual audit as well as regular checking by the specialists' inspecting teams. Therefore, there is no question of loss resulting from any false claim.

Posts of Officers Lying vacant in Armed Forces

3063. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of posts of officers lying vacant in the armed forces; and

(b) the effective measures/steps taken to meet the shortage of army officers?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The present vacancy position of officers in respect of three services is given below:—

Army	—	13323
Navy	—	1069
Air Force	—	695

2. Various measures have been initiated to make the shortage in the officer cadre in the Army, such as, University Entry Scheme, exemption from appearing in Combined Defence Service Examination for NCC 'C' certificate holders for induction as Short Service Commission Officer (SSCO), induction of women as officers, promotion of service JCOs/ORs into the newly created Special Commissioned Officer (SCO) cadre. An Image Projection Campaign was launched during 1997-98 with the assistance of professional advertising agency. Second phase of the Campaign has been approved.

3. Implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations in respect of defence services has resulted in improved pay scales, allowances and concenssions to armed forces personnel. It is expected that the comulative effect